



Hypertension

High Blood Pressure: New Guidelines

Cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in Idaho In 1996, 2,359 persons in Idaho died of diseases of the heart and 708 persons died of cerebrovascular disease. Such diseases often result from the complications of high blood pressure.

- From 1993-1995, the age-adjusted rate of cerebrovascular diseases, which includes stroke, decreased from 26.7 per 100,000 population to 24.9; however, in 1996 the rate increased to 26.3.
- Cerebrovascular disease, which includes stroke, was previously on the decline, but has increased from a 1995 age-adjusted rate of 24.9 per 100,000 to a 1996 rate of 26.3 per 100,000.

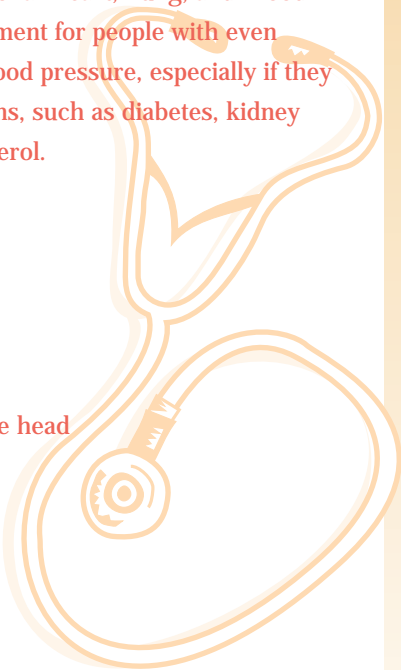
Early detection of high blood pressure can provide health care professionals time to counteract its dangers, which include: stroke, heart attack, congestive heart failure, kidney failure, and end-stage kidney disease.

New blood pressure guidelines

Adults with a blood pressure measurement higher than 140/90 or taking antihypertensive medication are considered to have high blood pressure. New guidelines from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) urge aggressive treatment for people with even high-normal (130-139/85-89) levels of blood pressure, especially if they also have certain other medical conditions, such as diabetes, kidney disease, and high levels of blood cholesterol.

Symptoms of high blood pressure

Commonly	Occasionally
no symptoms	headaches
	light-headedness
	ringing in the ears
	feeling of fullness in the head
	loss of energy



Who is at risk?
Proportion of Idahoans who've been told by a health professional they have high blood pressure*:

Age 65 and over:

49%

Age 55 and over:

42%

Less than high school education:

32%

Household income less than \$20,000:

29%

Adult men:

24%

Adult women:

23%

Hispanic adults:

18%

Ages 18 to 24:

8%

New Study: DASH Diet

A 1997 study, *Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)*, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, presented an eating plan, which has been found to lower high blood pressure, and lead to prevention and control. The DASH diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and low in saturated and total fat. If recommended for blood-pressure control, DASH should be part of a lifestyle that includes choosing foods lower in salt and sodium, keeping a healthy weight, being physically active, and drinking alcohol only in moderation.

Prevention and Control

Weight Loss As small a loss as 10 pounds can reduce high blood pressure.

Exercise Regular physical activity, preferably aerobic, 30-45 minutes on most days of the week is recommended.

Healthy Diet New NHLBI Guidelines recommend DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension). *See sidebar to the right.*

Lower Daily Sodium Intake No more than 2.4 grams sodium or 6 grams sodium chloride — about 1 teaspoon of salt —should be consumed.

Limit Alcohol Intake No more than one ounce of alcohol intake a day for men and one-half ounce for women is advisable.

Potassium Daily potassium intake from foods such as bananas, orange juice, potatoes, yogurt, and prunes should be at least 3.5 grams.

Quit Smoking Smoking cigarettes elevates blood pressure and is a risk factor for heart disease.

Stress Management Psychological stress can increase heart rate and elevate blood pressure.

Appropriate Medication Drug therapy is recommended for those who are not able to prevent or control hypertension through lifestyle changes.

Sources

*1997 Idaho Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey
The New England Journal of Medicine, April 17, 1997
Center for Vital Statistics and Health Policy, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
American Heart Association
NHLBI Guidelines, 1997 <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/nhlbi/nhlbi.htm> DASH, 1997, <http://dash.bwh.harvard.edu>

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Tips on eating the DASH way

- Start small. Make gradual changes in eating habits.
- Center meals around carbohydrates, such as pasta, rice, beans, or vegetables.
- Treat meat as one part of the whole meal, instead of the focus. For snacks, use fruits or low-fat, low-calorie foods, such as sugar-free gelatin.

DASH Diet

2,000 calories per day

Food group	Servings
Grains	8
Vegetables	4
Fruits	5
Dairy Foods	3
Meats, Poultry, and Fish	2
Nuts	1
Fats and Oils	2.5